



CWHS

Data Points

RESULTS FROM THE CALIFORNIA WOMEN'S HEALTH SURVEY

Limitation in the ability to perform usual activities, which may be temporary or permanent, can occur due to disease, physical impairment or mental illness. As women grow older, activity limitation occurs more often. While the majority of older women adapt well to having limitations, there are some older women who are depressed or have impaired mental health and may not be able to fully participate in usual activities. In addition, women who are limited in their activities due to physical health may become depressed or anxious, which can result in even further limitation. Limitation in the ability to perform basic activities may necessitate a change in living arrangements, such as moving to an assisted living facility or hiring help within the home.

The 1998 California Women's Health Survey asked women about six types of activity limitation: **"During the last four weeks, has your health limited: vigorous activities (e.g., lifting heavy objects, strenuous sports); moderate activities (e.g., moving a table, carrying groceries); the ability to walk up a hill or climb several flights of stairs; bending, lifting, or stooping; walking one block; eating, dressing, bathing,**

or using the toilet?" Other questions asked about feeling overwhelmed by problems that were piled up so high they could not be overcome, number of days of limited activity due to mental health, number of days in past month felt anxious or sad, and how often mood limited ability to work and do usual activities. This report focuses on women in the survey who are age 55 and older.

Overall, 43% of older women ages 55 and older reported one or more limited activities. Women aged 75+ were most likely to report limitation (53%), followed by women aged 65-74 (41%) and women ages 55-64 (38%).

Among women 55 and older, those who reported limitation were more likely than those without limitation to feel overwhelmed (16% vs. 6%), have more activity-limited days due to mental health (37% vs. 19%), indicate mood limited activity (10% vs. 4%), and wanted mental health help in the past year (16% vs. 8%)

Older women (ages 55+) who were limited in activities were more likely to report feeling anxious or sad daily or feeling overwhelmed over the past month than older women who were not activity limited.

ACTIVITY LIMITATION AND MENTAL HEALTH AMONG WOMEN AGES 55 AND OLDER, CALIFORNIA, 1998

CMRI (California
Medical Review, Inc.)

Percent of Women Ages 55 and Older Feeling Anxious or Sad Daily or Overwhelmed in the Past Month by Activity Limitation, California, 1998

